



Lan-Oak Park District

Munchkin Soccer 2011

Objective: The objectives of the Munchkin program is to learn some soccer basic skills, receive an introduction to team play, to encourage and nurture players of all skill levels, and to always have **fun!**

Achieving the objective: Competitive aspects are minimal, if present at all; games are scrimmages with no game score kept; and no formal standings are recorded. Young players are taught, not with trimmed-down versions of adult methods, but with methods and rules specially designed for their age group. Equipment, playing field, rules, number of players, are all reduced to keep the game simple and enjoyable for young players. Children with different degrees of soccer talent, soccer experience, soccer interest, and motivation will be able to find their own level and own satisfaction in the program.

Age Classification: The Munchkin age level is considered 4 to 6 years (U7) - exceptions to this age guideline are considered and decided by the park district only. Because of the young age of the players:

- No score is kept.
- Stress is NOT placed on winning.
- No skills evaluation or draft is conducted.

In the event of an age challenge, player will be asked to provide proof of age privately to the district representative and the determination of the district will be final.

Program/League: Programs with a small number of players or teams may not provide an interesting playing/program season. If the district cannot place four or more teams (due to low enrollment) the program will be cancelled.

Coaches: A maximum of two coaches (one head coach and one assistant coach) will be recorded for each formed team. It is strongly advised that both be present at all meetings, practices, games and functions of the team. Coaches are required to use only positive reinforcement and encouragement at all times with all players, and to refrain from negative remarks and behavior at any time that they may be interacting with the team. All coaches are required to provide the district with any and all information required to complete a criminal background check PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF THE PROGRAM - defined as the first organized meeting of the team whether in practice or in a game. Failure to do so will result in the coach being removed from the team for the duration of the season.

Team Size/Make-Up: For the younger players it is advisable to field a smaller number of players so that each child has more opportunity to play the ball, will develop skills at a faster rate, and will enjoy greater interest and participation.. Munchkin teams will roster up to 11 players - will game play a minimum of 5, a maximum of 7. A player lost to the team for the remainder of the season may be replaced for the remainder of the season. Players shall be assigned to teams by the district and in a manner that provides no intentional advantage to any one team over another. A balance of gender and age will be emphasized in determining teams. The child(ren) of the head coach and assistant coach are the only children placed by request (while team/coach requests will be attempted they are not guaranteed to be granted).

Participation: It is the intent of the program to provide all players equal playing time in order to practice and master skills, build comfort and confidence in playing and to have fun with teammates and new friends. Every player will be allowed to play at least the equivalent of one-half of every game (regardless of playing skill). Every player present at the start of the game will play at least the equivalent of one-half of the game; any player arriving late to the game will play at least the equivalent of one-half of the game or the remainder of the game if less than one-half remains.

Organizational Rules: Where the rules mandate a particular procedure by use of words such as "will", "must", or "shall", no variations will be permitted. Where rules are presented as guidelines by the use of words such as "may", modification or variation is allowed as long as the modification does not violate the spirit of the programs objective.

Tournaments: As no standings or scores are kept or recorded, the Munchkin program does not include a tournament, but may end the season with a fun special event if agreed upon by the district and coaches.

Officiating: It is within the discretion of the district to determine the form of officiating to be used. Coaches will act as officials for their Munchkin team during scrimmage games. Coaches will assure that Munchkin games are played with as little interference as possible by limiting whistling to only enforcement of the basic rules.

Field of Play: The Munchkin field will measure 50 yards X 30 yards and will be marked with distinctive lines. Longer field lines will be called touch lines, shorter field lines will be called goal lines. Flags will be placed at all four corners of the field, a half-way line will be marked joining the midpoint of each touch line, and at the mid-point of the halfway line a circle of 6-yard radius will be marked. The goal area will measure 6 yards X 15 yards and the goals are placed at the midpoint of

each goal line. A quarter circle of 1-yard radius shall be drawn inside each of the four corners of the field as corner arcs. All markings are part of the area they enclose.

The Ball: The ball used shall be size 3. The ball shall not be changed during play except with approval of the official.

Players, Substitutions, Goalkeeper Change: Only players rostered for a specific team will play for that specific team. **In the event of a team playing "short" the opposing team will play with the same number of players to insure an equal playing field.** When substituting players, all players must enter from the centerline of the field, must only enter during dead balls, and must make the coach (official) aware of the substitution. Goalkeepers may only change with the approval of the coach (official). No player will play more than one-half in the goal.

Players Equipment: The coach (official) may deny play to any player whose equipment does not conform to the requirements of the program. **The basic required equipment for each player will be shirt, shorts, socks, shoes and shin guards.** A player will not wear anything that is dangerous to another player or to himself/herself. Each team will wear district-provided pinnies of matching color and of color different from the opposing team. **The goalkeeper must wear a pinnie different from both teams and different from the official.** Numbers on pinnies are required and must be different for each player on the team. Shin guards must be entirely covered by socks, shall be made of a safe and suitable material, and shall provide a reasonable degree of protection for the player. Shoes may be gym shoes or soccer footwear. Jewelry is not allowed.

Duration of Game: **The Munchkin game will consist of two 20-minute halves with a running clock, and one 4-minute halftime.** Coach (official) from the "home" team will be the timekeeper. The "home" team will begin the game with the kick-off, the "away" team will kick-off the second half. **Play ends exactly at the instant that time runs out, regardless of the position or motion of the ball at that time.**

Rules of Play: The scrimmage/game rules have been simplified in order to allow younger players to easily learn basic play - but to also become familiar with the game of soccer.

- The offside rule will not apply.
- Restarts - For a ball over the touch line, the ball will be thrown in at the point it crossed the touch line. The player throwing the ball may not step over the touch line into the field of play. For a ball crossing the goal line (not scoring) and last touched by a defending player, the ball will be a corner kick from the corner of the field closest to where the ball crossed the goal line. For a ball crossing the goal line (not scoring) and last touched by an

attacking player, a goal kick is called and the goalkeeper will kick the ball anywhere along the top of the goal box.

- Throw-ins - The coach/official will correct a player that throws-in incorrectly. If the second throw-in is incorrect, the opposing team takes possession of the ball. The correct form for throw-ins will be both feet planted prior to release of the ball, the ball must be held with both hands, the ball will be delivered forward from behind or over the throwers head.
- Fouls and Misconduct - All fouls should result in indirect free kicks, after the nature of the foul has been explained to the player. There will be no cautions, ejections, or penalty kicks.
- Free Kicks - All free kicks will be indirect from the point of the foul. If the foul occurs in the goal box, the free kick is taken outside the goal box.
- A team has 10 minutes from the designated game start time before a forfeit is called. The time will be kept by the official/coach.
- Slide tackling is NOT permitted.

Other Regulations: The following are rules and regulations governing the Munchkin program that may not pertain to one of the above designations.

- All Lan-Oak Park District soccer leagues/programs will follow rules as established by FIFA, unless when exceptions are listed in the rules specifically designated by the district.
- Practice time and space is assigned equally to all teams, and is based on availability of parks and coaches.
- **Shin guards are also mandatory for practices and games.** If a child wears glasses it is required that the child wear "flex" frame or protective glasses during practices and games.
- All players and coaches will stay on their designated half of the field for the duration of game play and will not step onto the opposing team's field half, except for player injury.
- Parents/spectators will sit on the west side of the playing field; players and coaches will sit on the east side of the field during game play. Coaches allowing parents access to the east side of the field during game play will be subject to disciplinary action by the district (suspension or ejection from the league).
- The Lan-Oak Park District Code of Conduct is in effect for parents/spectators, coaches and players, and will be strictly enforced, from the first practice to the conclusion of the league.



The Lan-Oak Park District hopes you have a great season!!!